THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has decided to shore up Tier—I Capital of IFCI by subscribing Rs 400 crores to the 20 years convertible debentures to be issued by IFCI.

Restrictions on foreign visits of Ministers

1797. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH:
SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any restrictions have been imposed on foreign travel of Ministers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that even Ministers of State Governement would also be required to seek approval of the Prime Minister for foreign visit;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken to stop all foreign tours and utilize the services of embassies/High Commissions for all foreign work/negotiations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) The foreign travel of Central/State Government Minister is governed by instructions/guidelines issued by the Cabinet Secretariat O.M. No. 21 /1 /7/94-Cab dated 30-3-1995. All such proposals are processed in accordance with these instructions / guidelines and approved by the Prime Minister. The guidelines required that every proposal for a foreign visit is examined from the point of view of its functional justification. The need to adhere to these instructions has been emphasised time and again by the Government.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The extant guidelines require that a proposal has to be submitted by the State Government, after obtaining political clearance of Ministry of External Affairs and administrative clearance of the concerned Central Ministry. Department of Economic Affairs processes such proposals in terms of these guidelines and submits them to the Prime Minister for consideration and approval.

(e) No such action is proposed.

Reduction in Kerosene Quota to West Bengal

1798. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chief Minister of West Bengal had taken up with Government, the issue of reduction of the States quota of Kerosene from 1,16,000 kl. per month to 85,000 Kl.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of Government thereon;

(c) whether it is a fact that essentially most of the Kerosene oil users cannot afford cooking gas;

(d) if so, whether the increase in cooking gas supply connections can be the basis for reducing Kerosene oil quota; and

(e) if not, by when the quota reduction will be reduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) A request from Government of West Bengal was received.

(b) to (e) Reduction in kerosene allocation for the current fiscal year has been implemented taking into account the number of LPG connections released during April—September, 2000. The State / Union Territory Administrations are expected to rationalise the distribution of kerosene in case of the ration card holders having LPG connections. The kerosene being given to such consumers should become surplus and be available for distribution to consumers who cannot afford cooking gas. State Governments have been informed accordingly.

Setting up of "Indian Oil Foundation" by IOC

† 1799. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether "Indian Oil Foundation" has been set up by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. for safety, protection and promotion of national heritage of India and for providing information about past in future;

(b) if so, whether Gujarat will be incorporated in the second stage after completion of first stage; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.